

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the restriction requirement is requested for the following reasons.

Applicants strongly disagree with the Examiner's assertion that claim 1 is unpatentable over the prior art for the reasons fully set forth below. The claims of Group I are patentable over the cited art. The claims of Group II are drawn to a method of making the porous films of Group I. Claims 1-9 form a single general inventive concept. Claims 8-9 should be given an examination on the merits and such is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-7 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,945,210 to Senba et al in view of U.S. Patent 5,015,521 to Fujii et al and U.S. Patent 5,656,582 to Shiraishi et al for the reasons set forth in paragraph (5) of the Office Action. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is requested in view of the following remarks.

Senba '210 discloses a porous film prepared from a composition containing a polyolefin, an inorganic filler, dehydrated castor oil and hardened castor oil. Senba '210 does not disclose or suggest using a blend of linear low density polyethylene and branched low density polyethylene in the proportions recited in the present claims nor does Senba '210 disclose or suggest the use of a liquid ethylene/ α -olefin oligomer.

Fujii '521 has been relied upon by the Examiner to show the use of blends of a linear low density polyethylene and a branched low density polyethylene in compositions for manufacturing porous films. However, Fujii '521 also requires the presence of a free-radical forming agent to provide molecular coupling and produce modified polyethylenes

(column 4, lines 53-60). Thus, Fujii '521 teaches the art that the branched low density polyethylene/linear low density polyethylene blend must be modified by reaction with free radicals in order to provide the improved properties discussed in the reference.

Shiraishi '582 is directed solely to lubricating oils for rust prevention. This patent has nothing to do with manufacturing porous polyolefin films nor does it teach an equivalence between dehydrated or hardened castor oils and ethylene/ α -olefin oligomers.

In order to sustain a §103(a) rejection, there must be some suggestion in the references which would motivate those of ordinary skill to modify the invention of the primary reference in order to arrive at the presently claimed invention. Persons skilled in the art seeking a solution to problems associated with making polyolefin films, would not be motivated to look in the direction of lubricating oils for any solution to these problems. Applicants respectfully submit that the combined disclosures of the cited patents to Senba '210, Fujii '521 and Shiraishi '582 do not render obvious the present invention and the §103(a) rejection based on these patents should be withdrawn.

Claims 1-7 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Senba '210 in view of Fujii '521 and U.S. Patent 5,861,211 to Thakkar et al for the reasons expressed in paragraph (6) of the Office Action. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested for the following reasons.

The deficiencies of the disclosures of Senba '210 and Fujii '521 have been discussed above. Senba '210 fails to disclose blends of linear low density polyethylene and branched low density polyethylene and fails to disclose a liquid ethylene/ α -olefin oligomer. Fujii '521 discloses that blends of linear low density polyethylene and branched low

density polyethylene, to be effective in improving porous films, must be chemically modified by reaction with free-radical producing agents. One of ordinary skill could not reasonably predict the effect on film properties as a result of replacing the polyolefin of Senba '210 with the modified polyolefin blend of Fujii '521. *drop*

Thakkar '211 is directed to the use of pressure-sensitive adhesives to bond retroreflective sheeting to a plasticized polyvinyl chloride layer. Suitable monomeric plasticizers for polyvinyl chloride are listed in column 18, lines 5-57. Among the plasticizers listed are vegetable oils such as castor oil and "ethylene and α -olefin oligomer."

The Office Action incorrectly characterizes these plasticizers as "lubricating oils" and theorizes that in view of the disclosure of Thakkar '211, it would have been obvious to add an ethylene/ α -olefin oligomer to the polyolefin composition of Senba '210. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Thakkar '211 does not disclose polyolefin compositions nor porous films prepared therefrom. Accordingly, there is nothing in the disclosure of Thakkar '211 which would suggest improving the properties of polyolefin compositions. Thakkar '211 simply has no disclosure which would motivate those of ordinary skill to add an ethylene/ α -olefin oligomer to the compositions of Senba '210 for any purpose whatsoever.

Accordingly, the combination of Senba '210, Fujii '521 and Thakkar '211 does not suggest the presently claimed invention and the §103(a) rejection based on these patents should be withdrawn.

Claims 1-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over JP 11-158305 in view of Shiraishi '582 for the reasons set forth in paragraph (7) of the Office Action. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested in view of the following comments.

As acknowledged in the Office Action, JP '305 does not disclose or suggest the presence of an ethylene/ α -olefin oligomer. The deficiencies of Shiraishi '582 have been discussed above. Whereas, JP '305 relates solely to the manufacture of porous polyolefin films, Shiraishi '582 relates solely to the preparation of lubricating oils for rust prevention. The base lubricating oil used in Shiraishi '582 is an ether oil which may also contain a synthetic oil such as an ethylene/ α -olefin oligomer.

There would be no motivation to add the lubricating oil oligomers of Shiraishi '582 to the porous films of JP '305. One of ordinary skill seeking to overcome problems associated with porous polyolefin films simply would not look to the art areas of rust-preventive lubricating oils.

Moreover, one of ordinary skill could not reasonably predict the effect on the properties of the porous films by adding a liquid ethylene/ α -olefin oligomer. This is supported by the disclosure on pages 7 and 8 of JP '305 which shows the difficulty in predicting the suitability of various known lubricants such as refining castor oil (comparative Example 5), hydrogenated castor oil (comparative Example 6), octadecanamide (comparative Example 7), oleic amide (comparative Example 9), behenic acid amide (comparative Example 10) and ricinoleic-acid amide (comparative Example 11).

Based on the above, the §103(a) rejection of JP '305 in view of Shiraishi '582 should be withdrawn.

From the foregoing, further and favorable action in the form of a Notice of Allowance is believed to be next in order, and such action is earnestly solicited. If there are any questions concerning this paper or the application in general, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (703) 838-6683 at his earliest convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

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